Improvement in health services

†*177. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any national norms in respect of the availability of health services have been prescribed for various States;

(b) whether it is a fact that the availability of health services in a number of States is very deplorable as compared to other States; and

(c) if so, the details of steps being taken to improve the state of health services in such States, particularly in far-flung backward hilly areas?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) Population based norms have been prescribed for establishment of rural healthcare institutions, namely the Sub Centres, Primary Health Centres and Community Health Centres along with their staffing pattern and the norms are different for general areas and the tribal and hilly areas. Such population based norms have also been prescribed for urban healthcare infrastructure *viz*. Urban Family Welfare Centres and Urban Health Posts.

(b) Differences in availability of health services have been observed across states in terms of both establishment of public health institutions and staffing of the institutions *vis-a-vis* the norms as also due to shortage of essential drugs and consumables and lack of diagnostic and treatment facilities.

(c) Health is a State subject and the responsibility of improving the state of health services primarily rests with the State Governments. However, the Central Government has been making every effort to increase its contribution to public health expenditure. The resources for public investment in health sector are being augmented by securing assistance from various bilateral and multilateral agencies for implementation of various disease control programmes. For improving primary healthcare services, the Tenth Plan goal is to establish primary healthcare institutions required to meet the healthcare needs of the 1991 population as per the norms. For meeting needs of the growing population, the strategy is to strengthen the established institutions instead of opening new institutions.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Other steps taken by the Government include implementation of the national disease control programmes throughout the country for control of major diseases like Malaria, TB, Leprosy, AIDS, Blindness, Cancer and Mental Health. Also, norms for providing assistance under the various disease control programmes have been relaxed for remote, hilly and tribal areas. State Health Systems Project is being implemented with World Bank assistance in seven states to upgrade the secondary health infrastructure and provide quality healthcare services to the people, especially the rural poor and the under-served. 10% of the central sector health plan outlay is earmarked for the North-Eastern States including Sikkim. In order to provide specialized medical care to the people of the entire North Eastern Region, the North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health and Medical Sciences (NEIGRIHMS), Shillong is proposed to be upgraded to a 500-bedded super speciality referral hospital. Primary health is also one of the six components under the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) wherein state are given Additional Central Assistance under the scheme for improving health services in the state. Also, it is proposed in the Union Budget 2004-05 that new hospitals with 100 beds or more to be set up in rural areas would be entitled to a 100% deduction of their profits for a period of 5 years.

Processing of fruits and vegetables

*178. DR. VIJAY MALLYA:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that only two per cent of the vegetables in the country are being processed at present as against 15-40 per cent in other countries;

(b) whether there is any proposal to reduce excise duty on processed foods to boost the demand for the products in the country;

(c) whether Government are contemplating to provide a supporting network of infrastructure of roads, electricity, transport and cold storage, etc. to the processed food sector; and